



## Penelope goes for her heart checkup



The Canadian Congenital Heart Alliance launched their children's book "*Penelope goes for her heart checkup*" in February 2021.

This illustrated book for children ages 5-8, follows Penelope - a young girl - as she travels to the hospital for her 'heart checkup'. Reading this story with your child a few days before their 'heart checkup' will assist in preparing them for their visit with the 'Heart Team'.

The book includes 2 colouring activity pages to help your child engage with Penelope on her journey. Download here  [Download Penelope and her Heart Team colouring page.pdf](#) (180.32 KB)

Some discussion points for parents include:

- The importance of life-long 'heart checkups' to monitor your heart and stay healthy. It is normal for an individual with a congenital heart condition to have regular 'heart check-ups', just like checkups at the dentist or eye doctor.
- Talk with your child about their fears and anxieties leading up to or after a 'heart check-up' and develop strategies to cope. For example, being prepared with a list of questions.
- Discuss what to expect with your child. Plan ahead how to best help your child to understand their visit - e.g. what can they wear to the heart check-up that will be suitable for their echo or ECG if they don't want to get undressed or wear a hospital gown.
- Discuss with your child any limitations on their activity. Most children with CHD do not have any restrictions, but each child is unique, and this may be something to talk about with the 'Heart Team'.

The book is available as a flipbook on our website, or as a downloadable PDF. Our next steps include translating it to French, making printed copies available to paediatric CHD clinics across Canada, and also available for purchase. We would also like to create an animated video.

If you have found this resource helpful and would like to support this initiative, please consider donating [here](#).

### Penelope goes to her heart checkup - flipbook

### Penelope goes to her heart checkup - download

 [Download Penelope goes for her heart checkup\\_Final.pdf](#) (23.6 MB)

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*Made possible through a Riipen virtual student internship with funds from the RBC Future Launch program.*  
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